

**Remarks**

Claims 1-73 are pending. Claims 62-71 have been withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1, 2, 5-17, 19-22, 24-33, 35-40, 42, 46-49, 51-53, 55-59, 72, and 73 stand rejected. Claims 3, 4, 18, 23, 34, 41, 43-45, 50, 54, 60, and 61 are objected to. By way of the above amendment, claims 1, 35, and 72 have been amended. Claims 3, 4, 44, 45, 62-71, and 73 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Moreover, new claims 74-91 have been added. No new matter has been added by the above amendments and addition of new claims.

At the outset, Applicants wish to express their appreciation to the Examiner for indicating that claims 3, 4, 18, 23, 34, 41, 43-45, 50, 54, 60, and 61 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The claims have been amended accordingly. Specifically, independent claim 1 has been amended to include limitations from claim 3. Independent claim 35 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 44. Independent claim 72 has been amended to include limitations similar to those of claim 1. Finally, Independent claim 73 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Applicants do not acquiesce to the positions set forth in the Office Action rejecting claims 1, 2, 5-17, 19-22, 24-33, 35-40, 42, 46-49, 51-53, 55-59, 72, and 73. Moreover, Applicants wish to note that in the Office Action, the Examiner asserts that Hebestreit et al. disclose the use of a metal filler material at column 1, lines 20-25. Applicants submit that Hebestreit et al. do not disclose the claimed metal filler material. At column 1, lines 20-25, Hebestreit et al. disclose that the guitar string may be made of metal, not the use of the claimed metal filler material.

Moreover, in paragraph 5 of the Office Action, the Examiner further asserts that Hebestreit and Nicholl do not disclose the use of a cover with porosity or fluoropolymer. Applicants submit that Hebestreit et al. disclose the use of a porous fluoropolymer cover. Specifically, at column 3, lines 16-18, Hebestreit et al. disclose the use of a porous polytetrafluoroethylene cover. Nevertheless, Applicants still submit that the amended claims and newly submitted claims are patentable over the prior art.

Since all of the pending claims and the newly submitted claims contain subject matter that the Examiner has indicated as being allowable, Applicants respectfully request issuance of a favorable Office Action on the merits.

Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is invited to telephone Applicants' undersigned representative.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kevin J. Boland". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and address.

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Date: November 15, 2006